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~~The purpose of this 1955 - 1967 segment of the history of the~~

specialized research support activities developed by OGC for the Central Intelligence Agency. CIA was having growth problems since its establishment in 1949. As the concept of a centralized intelligence agency was new to the U.S. Government, so was the idea of a central reference service of the type being established by OGC, even though the latter concept was prominent in the planning for CIA's predecessor, CIG.

The mission of OCB was to ensure that the specialized reference support, given first to CIA was speedy and efficient, and second to the intelligence community as effective as available manpower and time permitted. OCB had to demonstrate that its central reference facilities filled a vital need and were ~~were first-rate~~, productive ~~and~~ and of high quality, comprehensive. The assignment was broad in scope and encompassed a wide range of problems ~~many facets~~.

Since the research elements of CIA were in a similar developmental stage, OCP had its problems eliciting from analysts the specific kinds of facilities they required in support of their own programs. OCP encouraged users' expressions of their needs. While some responded and their comments resulted in improvements, OCP developed its systems primarily upon estimates of optimum service requirements based on problems arising in responding to customer needs, or in providing a facility not available elsewhere. OCP had no precedent, ^{to follow;} It became one ~~itself~~.

In the intelligence community OCB developed a reputation for service through the use of ~~a least one procedure~~ ^{creation of a system} that none of the ^{other} members could match for some years. ~~a productive system~~ ^{namely a system for} of processing and retrieving intelligence documents prepared not only by CIA but by all the other agencies releasing their material to OCB.

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The OCR system was able to produce urgently ~~the~~ required documentation for a particular agency when often the product was that of the requesting agency itself; ~~only~~ its ^{own} document retrieval system was unable to find the material in time.

During the last few years of the scope of this narrative, OCR ^{was} ~~the~~ ^{new name} "Office of Central Reference" ^{adopted in August 1955} concentrated on developing more modern techniques of information retrieval, ^{which} ~~especially the application of computer technology. As a~~ ^{of necessity} ~~resulted in diminishing services to the intelligence community. There~~ ^{Some times there were a decline in} were two reasons for this: ~~the~~ increasingly stringent budget cuts, ~~required by the~~ ^{growing needs of the research offices in CIA for increasing their personnel, by the} ~~training of specialized personnel capable of harnessing the computers, and by the~~ ^{improved} ~~replacement of out-moded machine equipment for retrieval by computers, and~~ the development of retrieval capabilities by the other agencies.

The variety of OCR activities has been remarkable. The ~~details~~ ^{of them} ~~were almost innumerable.~~ The history covers only a small portion, intended primarily to record some of the achievements, frustrations, conflicts and problems. Those who participated in the creation of the events covered probably found their roles exciting and anything but static. This is a story then of how OCR responded dynamically to rapidly changing needs, pioneered ⁱⁿ creating means to meet them, and made a substantial contribution during the growth period of the Agency and the Community. It is a story of initiative, flexibility and accomplishment.

The arrangement of the twelve ~~chapters~~ ^{of them} in this history has been evolved to give ~~the~~ ^{the} background to 1953, and ~~how~~ ^{how} OCR marshalled its resources prior to the transition of 1957 - 1958, in the first four chapters. After that, each of the chapters deals with a specific broad subject chronologically within the subject. ~~The conclusions are the prerogatives of the authors; they may be considered subjective but it is hoped objective as well.~~

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